

A couple is seen from behind, sitting in a wooden boat on a body of water. The woman is wearing a straw hat and a floral dress, pointing towards a large, steep, forested mountain peak. The man is wearing a floral shirt and white shorts. The background features more similar mountain peaks under a blue sky with light clouds. The boat's wooden deck is visible in the foreground.

BON VOYAGE, BUT...

Essential information for
Canadians travelling outside Canada



TRAVEL.GC.CA



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has information on preparing for travel outside Canada and staying safe while you're away, including:

- services that the Government of Canada provides to Canadians travelling outside Canada
- information on how to prepare for your return to Canada
- contacts for more information
- a checklist that you should review before leaving

You can bring the booklet with you while you're away or download a copy at travel.gc.ca/travelling/publications.

BEFORE YOU GO

Be informed

Before you leave, and no matter where you're travelling to, visit our travel and tourism website at travel.gc.ca. Look at the Travel Advice and Advisories at travel.gc.ca/destinations.

The website offers travel advice and information on:

- how to prepare for travel
- what to do if something goes wrong while you are outside Canada
- how to prepare for your return to Canada

The Travel Advice and Advisories page has country-specific travel information about:

- safety and security
- entry and exit requirements
- health
- laws and culture
- natural disasters and climate

Check the Travel Advice and Advisories page for your destinations when you're planning your trip and again just before you leave. It's a good idea to also check it while you're away if the situation changes at your destination.

Remember, you are responsible for your travel choices. Make sure you have enough money to cover the cost of your trip, including departure taxes. You should be ready to pay for unexpected expenses.

Stay connected

Before you leave, make sure you stay connected to Canada wherever you are:

- Go to travel.gc.ca/offices to find the contact information for Government of Canada offices at the locations you plan to visit.
- Subscribe to the Registration of Canadians Abroad service at travel.gc.ca/register. You'll receive the latest information and advice about the countries you're visiting. You will get urgent updates about incidents that could affect your safety and security.
- Follow @TravelGoC on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
- Leave a copy of your itinerary with a trustworthy person in Canada. Include your contact information for the places where you'll be staying.

Travel documents

Canadian passport

For Canadians, a valid Canadian passport is the most reliable and accepted travel document. It proves that you're a Canadian citizen and have the right to enter Canada.

Before you plan your trip, check that you have a valid passport:

- Is your personal information correct?
- Did you sign page 3? Children under the age of 16 don't need to sign their passport.
 - If the child did not sign it, leave the signature block blank. A passport will be invalid if it is signed by anyone else.
- Did you enter your contact information on page 4?
- Has your passport expired? Will it soon expire? It may not be enough that your passport is valid during your travel.
 - Check the entry and exit requirements in the [Travel Advice and Advisories](#) for your destinations. Your passport may need to be valid for a period of time after you plan to leave the country you are visiting, even if that period of time is longer than your planned trip.

If you plan to travel outside Canada with your family, each family member needs a valid passport.

If you are a Canadian citizen with dual nationality travelling by air, you must present a valid Canadian passport to board your flight to Canada.

Leave your birth or citizenship certificate with a trusted friend or family member. It may help in case you need to replace your passport while travelling.

When you're not travelling, keep your passport in a secure location where it isn't easily accessible to others.

Visas and other requirements for travelling to other countries

Well before you plan to leave on your trip, visit the Travel Advice and Advisories page at travel.gc.ca/destinations. Select your destination(s) and read the "Entry and exit requirements" subsection.

Check if you need a visa or other travel authorization to go to or stay at your destination. If you do, contact the government representatives in Canada of the countries where you'll be going.

The most common visas are in the business, work, student and tourist categories. Examples of information you may need to apply for a visa include:

- certified criminal record check (provided by the RCMP)
- medical certificate
- vaccination certificate
- proof of testing for transmissible diseases

Canadians need to apply for an electronic travel authorization document before travelling to some destinations, including the United States, Australia and Europe.

Some countries need proof that you have enough money to support yourself during your stay, such as a bank statement. You may also need proof that you'll be leaving your destination after your stay, such as a ticket or any visas for your travel to another country.

Consent letter for children travelling abroad

If a child is travelling outside Canada without both parents or all legal guardians, we recommend that the child travel with a consent letter. The consent letter demonstrates that parents or guardians who are not with the child have agreed to let the child travel outside Canada. Border officials may ask for it when the child enters or leaves a foreign country or when the child arrives in Canada. For more information, contact your destination country's government representatives in Canada. The contact information of foreign government representatives and templates for a consent letter are available at travel.gc.ca/travelling/children.

Travel insurance

You should have travel health insurance before you leave Canada. The Government of Canada won't pay your medical fees while you're outside Canada. Your provincial or territorial health plan may only pay a small part of the costs—if any at all.

No matter where you're travelling, your travel health insurance policy should always cover:

- medical fees and services
- medical evacuations
- pre-existing medical conditions
- repatriating remains in case of death

It's up to you to understand the terms of your insurance policy. When assessing a travel insurance plan, you may wish to consider the following questions:

- **duration of coverage:** Are you covered for your entire trip? Can you extend your coverage if you decide to spend more time outside Canada?

- **protections:** Does your policy cover trip cancellation, document replacement, baggage loss and other damages?
- **restrictions:** What are the restrictions and limitations of your policy?
 - Does the policy cover specific activities or events (for example, sports, war, suicide or substance abuse)?
 - Does the policy not cover certain locations or countries?
 - What coverage would you have if there were a medical emergency due to a pre-existing condition?
- **emergency help:** Does your insurance company have a toll-free telephone number you can call? Can you call at any time from anywhere you travel?
- **claims:** How do you make a claim?
 - What is the process?
 - What maximums, deductibles and co-insurance would apply to a claim?
- **multiple travellers:** If you are travelling with other people, does each person need a separate policy? Can one policy cover everyone?
- **business travel:** If you have out-of-country coverage through your group plan, are there any restrictions? Does it cover you if you are travelling alone on business?

If you're driving, make sure you have driver and vehicle coverage in case you have an accident.

Carry your insurance information with you while you're travelling. Leave a copy of the information with a friend or relative at home or email it to them.

Protecting your health

Before you leave, visit the Travel Advice and Advisories page at travel.gc.ca/destinations. Select your destinations and read the “Health” subsection.

Visit a travel medicine clinic or your health-care provider at least 6 weeks before your planned departure date. Your health-care provider will decide if you need vaccinations or preventive medication. They will let you know which steps you should take to reduce risks to your health while you travel.

If you travel with medication:

- Keep all medication in its original, labelled container to avoid problems at customs.
- Pack extra medication in case you’re away longer than expected.
- Carry a copy of your original prescription that shows both the generic and trade names of the product. You may need this if you need more medication.
- Bring a doctor’s certificate explaining the medical purpose of injection supplies that you use. Also check if your airline allows needles and syringes in carry-on luggage.

It’s illegal to enter or leave Canada with cannabis or products that contain cannabis, even if you use cannabis for medical purposes.

Check the customs regulations for medications of your destination country. Some countries control or ban certain prescription and over-the-counter medications that are available in Canada. Your medication may be confiscated, and you may face heavy fines or even jail time.

Safety and security

Before you leave, visit the Travel Advice and Advisories page at travel.gc.ca/destinations. Select your destinations and read the “Safety and security” subsection. Note information on common local scams and crime trends as well as the phone number of the local police.

While you’re travelling:

- Never carry your passport, travel tickets, identification documents, cash, credit cards and insurance papers together. If they’re lost or stolen, you risk having no identification or money.
- Hide your valuables by using a money belt or a travel bag with hidden sections.
- Don’t carry large amounts of money or wear expensive clothes or jewellery in public.

Travelling and money

Canadian money and traveller’s cheques are rarely used abroad. Your debit or credit cards may not be accepted in your destination country. It’s a good idea to have a small amount of local money with you when you arrive, unless importing local currency is a crime. You can get information about your destination’s currency from a bank, foreign currency agent, travel agent, or foreign embassy or consulate in Canada.

Before you leave Canada:

- Ask your financial institution if you can use your debit or credit card at your destination. They may also have branches or partners there.
- Find out which is the best currency to carry to your destination.

- Check your destination's currency regulations. There may be limits on the amount of money you can take into or out of the country.
- Arrange a way to get more money if you need it.
- Be careful if you're travelling to meet someone new. Cases of personal and relationship scams are more and more common.

WHILE YOU ARE AWAY

Be careful

In certain countries, criminals target foreigners. If you're the victim of a crime while you're travelling, call the local police first. You can contact the nearest Government of Canada office for guidance.

Follow the same safety rules abroad as you would at home:

- Don't wander into unknown areas. Find out how safe they are before you go.
- Never leave your drinks unattended, and never accept food or drinks from strangers. Someone could add drugs that put you at risk of sexual assault or robbery.
- Don't pick up hitchhikers or cross borders with people you've just met.
- Never take anything across a border for someone else, even if it's just an envelope.
- Watch your luggage and handbags. Keep them closed and locked if possible.

Stay in touch with your family and friends at home, particularly if you told them that you would. Contact them if the safety and security conditions are getting worse in the region or country where you're travelling.

Protect your passport

You are responsible for keeping your passport safe at all times. This is also the case if any other travel documents are issued to you or your child:

- Never share the information in your travel documents with anyone unless it's necessary.
- Don't leave your travel documents unattended or in an unsafe place.
- Prevent water damage to your passport by storing it in a plastic folder or a waterproof pouch.
- Don't write in, deface or alter pages in, or add stickers to, your passport.

If your passport is lost or stolen while you're outside Canada, contact the nearest Government of Canada office. You'll need proof of Canadian citizenship to apply for a new passport. You can't use your passport once you report it lost. If you find your passport after you reported it missing, return it at once to a passport office or to the nearest Government of Canada office. You can find the contact information of offices of Canada abroad at travel.gc.ca/offices.

If you damage your passport, apply for a new one. A damaged passport can lead to long delays at passport checkpoints. You may also be unable to cross the border or board a plane.

Local laws and culture

Visit the Travel Advice and Advisories page at travel.gc.ca/destinations. Select your destination and read the “Laws and culture” subsection.

Your Canadian citizenship doesn’t exempt you from following local laws and local cultural, religious and social traditions. If you commit a crime, not being aware of the law isn’t an excuse. If you need a lawyer, obtain a list of local lawyers by contacting the nearest Government of Canada office. You would be responsible for paying your legal costs.

Culture

You must abide by local laws and regulations in other countries, even if you don’t agree with some of their customs and traditions, or cultural and other practices.

Clothing

In many countries, suitable clothing may be gender-specific and there may be laws on what you can wear. Penalties for disobeying local laws can be severe.

Religious sites

You may not be able to visit religious sites if you aren’t a member of a faith associated with a particular site. Ask permission before taking photographs of religious artifacts, buildings or worshippers.

Cultural sites

Canadians may be prosecuted in Canadian courts if they commit certain acts against significant cultural sites and objects outside Canada.

Laws

Certain countries don't protect:

- religious freedom
- freedom of association, speech or the press
- differences in sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics

The legal systems in other countries can be very different from Canada's. You may be charged just for being with a person who is suspected—or found guilty of—a crime. Even if you're a bystander at a political demonstration, you may be considered a participant and you could be arrested with those involved.

Recreational drugs

Buying, using, importing or exporting recreational drugs is prohibited almost everywhere. If you buy and use drugs, even in countries where they may be easily available, you can be charged, fined or given a long prison sentence.

Photos and videos

Don't take photographs or videos of military or government facilities, or industries such as oil refineries. Your device could be confiscated, and you could even be accused of spying.

Sexual exploitation of children

Most countries strongly enforce laws against the sexual exploitation of children. Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada can be charged and prosecuted in Canada for child sex offences in a foreign country if they haven't been already convicted of these offences in the foreign country.

Arrest and detention

If you're suspected or accused of a crime in certain countries, you may be detained for an unknown length of time without bail. You may not have a right to a lawyer or to a trial in your own language.

If you're detained or arrested outside Canada and want to notify Government of Canada officials, clearly ask the arresting authorities to contact the nearest Government of Canada office. They can call +1-613-996-8885 or email sos@international.gc.ca. The contact information of Government of Canada offices abroad is available at travel.gc.ca/offices.

If you're a Canadian with dual citizenship and you're in a country where you hold citizenship, local authorities could refuse to give you access to Canada's consular services. This could prevent Canadian consular services officials from helping you.

Canada's consular services

Consular services are the services that a government provides to its citizens in another country. Canada's consular services include advice and information about travelling outside Canada and offering services at Government of Canada offices abroad.

If you need consular services, contact the nearest Government of Canada office abroad. You can find contact information at travel.gc.ca/offices. After office hours, you can also contact the 24/7 Emergency Watch and Response Centre in Ottawa:

- phone: +1-613-996-8885
- email: sos@international.gc.ca
- SMS: +1-613-686-3658 (carrier charges may apply)

- WhatsApp: +1-613-909-8881 (carrier charges may apply)
- Signal: +1-613-909-8087

Make sure your message is clear and that you leave a telephone number or contact address.

The representatives who offer these services are consular services officials. Canada's consular services officials work hard to help Canadians who ask for help outside Canada. However, safety and security conditions, and laws and regulations, in the region or country where you are may limit the help you can receive. The level of cooperation from individuals and organizations outside Canada can also limit the consular services officials can provide.

Make sure you understand what consular services the Government of Canada can and can't provide before you travel.

Safety, security and medical emergencies

Consular services officials **can**:

- give you a list of local doctors and hospitals
- contact family or friends, with your consent, if you've had an accident or are held by police
- give advice and guidance if a person is missing or if a child is abducted outside Canada

Consular services officials **cannot**, among other things:

- guarantee your personal safety or security outside Canada
- take responsibility for a child outside Canada who has been abducted by a parent involved in a custody dispute
- give medical services (including vaccination) or cover your medical expenses outside Canada

Passports, citizenship, immigration and visas

Consular services officials **can**:

- help you replace a lost, stolen, damaged or expired Canadian passport
- take your application for a new Canadian passport or Canadian citizenship certificate

Consular services officials **cannot**, among other things:

- help solve immigration-related problems such as overstaying a visa, or help with visa applications
- answer questions or help with immigration to Canada or Canadian visa-related issues
- answer questions about permanent residence (contact Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for information)

Legal issues and enforcement of local laws

Consular services officials **can**:

- give you a list of local lawyers
- give you public sources of information on local laws and regulations
- offer a range of services to Canadians detained abroad (all services may not be always available at all locations)
- give you contact information for local police and medical services if you've been robbed or sexually assaulted or are the victim of other violent acts

Consular services officials **cannot**, among other things:

- post bail, pay legal fees or medical expenses
- give legal advice, or get involved in private legal matters or financial disputes
- get you out of a foreign prison
- investigate a crime or death abroad: this is the responsibility of local authorities
- interfere in an investigation
- ask local authorities to give you special treatment or to exempt you from the due process of local law
- take fingerprints or get a criminal record check

Death abroad

Consular services officials **can**:

- ask Canadian police to notify next of kin in case of a death abroad
- in countries that have funeral homes, help you find one that can repatriate a loved one's remains to Canada

Consular services officials **cannot**, among other things:

- pay for the burial, cremation or repatriation of the remains of a deceased Canadian citizen
- translate official documents

General services

Consular services officials **can**:

- give you a list of translators and interpreters
- offer notarial services (all services may not be available at all locations)
- help you with private money transfers
- help you to vote in Canadian elections

Consular services officials **cannot**, among other things:

- refund your hotel costs if a trip is delayed or cancelled
- help you find employment
- accept your mail or store your personal effects
- search for lost items while you are outside Canada
- perform marriage services

RETURNING TO CANADA

Before you return to Canada, check the border measures and entry requirements at travel.gc.ca/returning.

Check the Travel Advice and Advisories for your destination at travel.gc.ca/destinations. In certain countries, you must pay a departure tax or service fee at the airport or your point of departure. Make sure you have enough money to pay it. In some countries, you may need to pay in local funds.

If you're arriving at one of Canada's busiest international airports, you can simplify your arrival by using the "Advance CBSA Declaration" within the ArriveCAN app to prepare your customs and immigration declaration.

If you registered with the Registration of Canadians Abroad service, update your profile and make sure that the departure date from your destination country is correct.

Medical problems

If you're feeling ill and think that you've been exposed to a contagious illness or disease while you were travelling, tell a screening officer or quarantine officer when you arrive in Canada. If you are a passenger on a ship, airplane, train or bus, you should tell the staff that you are ill.

If you become sick or feel unwell after returning to Canada, tell your doctor where you've been outside Canada. Explain what you did during your trip and provide information on any medical treatment or care you received (for example, blood transfusions, injections, dental care or surgery).

Declare all goods

When you return to Canada, you must declare all goods you purchased or acquired while outside Canada. These include:

- **goods** purchased at a Canadian or foreign duty-free shop
- **gifts, prizes and awards** that you're carrying with you or are having shipped to you
- **foods, plants, animals** and related products that you are bringing into Canada
- **repairs** or alterations you made to your car, boat or airplane while you were out of the country

Keep original receipts of the purchases and repairs you made during your trip. If you're unsure whether you should declare an item, do so. A border services officer will let you know what the next steps are.

Plant and animal products

You are legally required to declare all food, plant and animal products you bring with you into Canada. These products include live animals and their by-products:

- **animal products** such as cooked or raw meats; milk, butter and cheese; fish and seafood; eggs; fat; hides and skins; trophies; and insects
- **plant products** such as fruits and vegetables; seeds, nuts and herbs; houseplants, flowers and trees; roots, vines, bulbs and soil; wood and wood products (for example, furniture, carvings and bark)

Some of these items are prohibited or regulated because they can carry pests and diseases.

If you don't declare these products, or if you don't have the required permits or certificates:

- Your products may be taken from you and possibly destroyed.
 - You may need to pay for the costs of disposal, quarantine, treatment or removal of these items from Canada.
- You may have to pay a financial penalty.
- You may be prosecuted.

Duty- and tax-free personal exemptions

If you've been outside Canada for at least 24 hours, you may qualify for a personal exemption. A personal exemption allows you to bring goods of a certain value into Canada without paying duty and taxes. Exemptions to alcohol or tobacco products apply after you've been outside Canada for at least 48 hours. Visit Customs at [**travel.gc.ca/customs**](https://travel.gc.ca/customs) for details about personal exemptions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WEBSITE LINKS

Travel outside Canada	travel.gc.ca/travelling
Travel advice and advisories	travel.gc.ca/destinations
Registration of Canadians Abroad service	travel.gc.ca/registration
Assistance outside Canada	travel.gc.ca/assistance
Canadian passports and other travel documents	canada.ca/passports
Government of Canada offices abroad	travel.gc.ca/offices
Foreign representatives in Canada	https://www.international.gc.ca/protocol-protocole/rep.aspx?lang=eng
Travel publications	travel.gc.ca/publications

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA CONTACT INFORMATION

General travel information

Global Affairs Canada

Phone:

1-800-267-6788 (in Canada and the United States)

+1-613-944-6788

TTY:

1-800-394-3472 (in Canada and the United States)

+1-613-944-1310

Email:

travel@international.gc.ca

Website:

[Travel.gc.ca](https://travel.gc.ca)

Emergency assistance outside Canada

Global Affairs Canada

Contact the nearest Canadian office (travel.gc.ca/offices)

Contact the Emergency Watch and Response centre in Ottawa:

Phone:

+1-613-996-8885 (call collect from abroad, where service is available)

1-800-387-3124 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

TTY:

1-800-394-3472 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

+1-613-944-1310

Email:

sos@international.gc.ca

SMS:

+1-613-686-3658

WhatsApp:

+1-613-909-8881

Signal:

+1-613-909-8087

Website:

travel.gc.ca/emergency

Canadian passports

Passport Program

Phone:

1-800-567-6868 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

If you're outside Canada, contact the nearest Canadian office

(travel.gc.ca/offices)

TTY:

1-866-255-7655 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

+1-514-283-5197 from outside Canada and the United States

Website:

Canada.ca/passport

Canadian permanent residence and visas (foreigners entering Canada)

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Phone:

1-888-242-2100 (toll-free in Canada only)

Automated service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Website:

cic.gc.ca/helpcentre

Travel health

Public Health Agency of Canada

Phone:

1-844-280-5020 (toll-free in Canada only)

Website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/travel-health.html>

Canada customs and requirements to enter Canada

Canada Border Services Agency

Phone:

1-800-461-9999 (toll-free in Canada)

+1-204-983-3500 or
+1-506-636-5064 (from outside Canada)

TTY: 1-866-335-3237 (in Canada)

Website:

cbsa-asfc.gc.ca

Airport security

Canadian Air Transport
Security Authority (CATSA)

Phone:

1-888-294-2202
(toll-free in Canada only)

Website:

catsa-acsta.gc.ca

Bringing food and animal products into Canada

Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Phone:

1-800-442-2342 (toll-free
in Canada and the United States)

+1-289-247-4099 (local calls
and all other countries)

Website:

inspection.canada.ca

TRAVELLER'S CHECKLIST

Travelling outside Canada

- ☐ Visit travel.gc.ca for information and advice.
- ☐ Check the **Travel Advice and Advisories** for your destination(s). Get information about passports, entry and exit requirements, health and safety, and more. travel.gc.ca/advice.

Travel documents

- ☐ **Canadian passport:** Make sure it will be valid well past the date you expect to return to Canada.
- ☐ **Visas or electronic authorizations:** Check if you need one to enter your destination and apply well in advance. Check with your destination country about entry requirements.

- ❑ **Children:** If a child is travelling outside Canada without both parents or all legal guardians, an accompanying adult should carry documentation proving they have the right to travel with the child. Family or friends of the child should also have a copy of this documentation.
- ❑ **Dual citizenship:** You'll need your Canadian passport to come back to Canada. Check with your destination country about entry requirements.
- ❑ **Vaccination:** Check the proof of testing and of vaccination requirements for your destination and your return to Canada.

Health and safety

- ❑ **Travel health clinic:** Visit a clinic or your health-care provider 6 weeks before your trip.
- ❑ **Travel insurance:** Buy insurance even if it's for a short trip across the U.S. border.
- ❑ **Budget:** Plan your expenses and keep extra funds in case of emergency.
- ❑ **Itinerary:** Leave a copy with friends or family, along with copies of your passport identification page and your insurance policy.

Stay connected

- ❑ **Registration of Canadians Abroad service:** Sign up at travel.gc.ca/register to receive notices.
- ❑ **Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#):** @TravelGoC.

- ❑ **Government of Canada offices abroad:** Note the contact information of the nearest office of Canada at your destination. travel.gc.ca/offices.

In case of an emergency outside Canada, contact the nearest Canadian embassy or consulate.

(travel.gc.ca/offices)

You can also contact the Emergency Watch and Response Centre:

Email: sos@international.gc.ca

Phone: +1 613-996-8885 (call collect where available).

SMS: +1-613-686-3658 (carrier charges may apply)

WhatsApp: +1-613-909-8881 (carrier charges may apply)

Signal: +1-613-909-8087

Website: travel.gc.ca/emergency